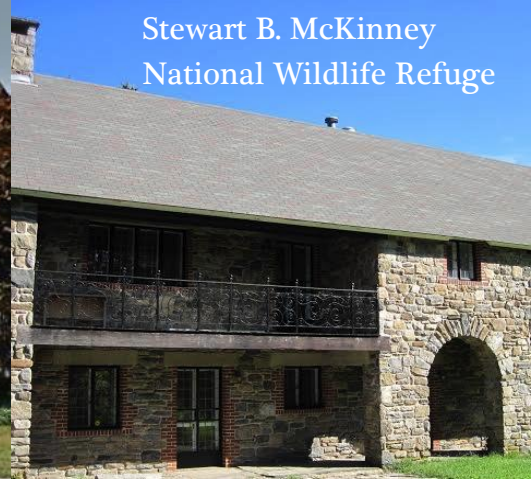




Yale Peabody
Museum



New Haven Department of
Parks, Recreation, & Trees



Stewart B. McKinney
National Wildlife Refuge

The Cherry Ann Project – Improvements to Beaver Ponds Park

In May 2013 the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service joined with many partner groups to form the New Haven Harbor Watershed Urban Wildlife Refuge Partnership. This initiative seeks to reconnect urban citizens to the nature that surrounds them and to engage them in improving wildlife habitat in their neighborhoods. The “Urban Oases” created by the partnership can then be enjoyed by both wildlife and people.

Audubon Connecticut, Common Ground High School, New Haven Urban Resources Initiative, New Haven Department of Parks, Recreation and Trees, New Haven Department of Education, Yale Peabody Museum, Yale School of Forestry and the Stewart B. McKinney National Wildlife Refuge are all collaborators in the Urban Wildlife Refuge Partnership, as are many citizens within the city. These partners have engaged the community by developing “schoolyard habitats” of native plants to attract birds and pollinators. They’ve also lead curriculum-based environmental education lessons in public schools and in parks and wildlife refuges.

The latest undertaking of this group is the development of a forgotten section of Beaver Ponds Park, off of Cherry Ann Street in New Haven. The partners have agreed to remove invasive plant species in the lot at the end of Cherry Ann Street. These efforts will further plans for an eco-friendly park featuring playground equipment, nature themed walking trails, a pollinator meadow, and a community garden.





The partners are also planning to install wayside exhibits to interpret trees and animals that can be found in the park. This task will be completed by the end of the summer, as the park walking trails are put into place.

From the very beginning, the Urban Wildlife Refuge Partnership has worked relentlessly to bring about a hope that this oasis will engage community members in appreciating the natural world around them, creating a safe haven for urban wildlife and urban youth. There can be a bridge between the needs of wildlife and urban citizens, and it has started right here.